

# Iron County Register.

By E. D. AKE

IRONTON, MISSOURI

## MOTHER'S WEDDING RING.

A circle pure and golden  
Upon my mother's hand,  
Her wedding ring is worn and thin—  
A plain and simple band.

Simple and plain as Virtue,  
For years it has withstood  
The burden and the toil, as life  
Bears out her years of good.

'Tis worn by toil and trouble  
And fingers clasped to pray,  
Till now 'tis but a golden thread—  
Her wedding ring to-day.

Pure as the truth it plighted,  
It shall not break or part,  
But wear as noble love should wear,  
True gold unto the heart.

O may the future give me  
A woman's helping hand  
To wear so long and faithfully  
That simple golden band.  
—Aloysius Coll, in Good Housekeeping.

## Mother Nanette's Sacrifice.

The Price She Paid to Save Her Son.

"Is it still no, Mother Nanette?" Mother Nanette spun, as was her custom, before the door. With one movement of her nimble old fingers she seized the fast revolving spindle. Then she raised her clear, bright eyes to the man and mixed in her tone friendly reproach:

"But Tonincheon, the joke goes too far. I, an old woman, to sell my hair as a girl might to buy furbelows. That would indeed be too laughable. I have said to you 100 times, no."

Antoine Honlin, whom everybody in the village called Tonincheon, approached with melancholy face and admired the wonderful silver tresses showing under the double hood which the old woman wore.

"Mother Nanette, you do wrong to reject my offer. You have a small fortune there on your head. Brown or light hair, one can find more than one wants, but such abundant soft white hair as yours—that is a rarity indeed."

"One ground more that I should keep this rarity," replied Mother Nanette, laughing.

"By no means," interrupted the tempter. "You are allowing a fine opportunity to escape you. See, I have offered you 150 francs. I will add 50 more—200 francs. That is a sum. So much no one else will give."

"No, the affair is settled. Give me your hand on it." He extended his hand, but instead of offering hers, Mother Nanette proudly stroked the beautiful white ornament of her old age.

"Not for a thousand, young man. You don't know how I pride myself on my snowy hair, and what pleasure it gives me when people admire it. The mayor said the other day:

"Your white hairs, Mother Nanette, are the witness and crown of your honest life."

"And it is true." The hair dealer shrugged his shoulders.

"Mere talk. The gold would serve you well in your circumstances. Without it you may suffer. Every one knows that you are not rich, Mother Nanette."

On the lips of the old woman appeared a smile of silent pride.

"One is always rich enough when one can work. I earn my bread by spinning. Besides, my grandson Jean found a good place in Paris. When he has saved some money he will come back again. We will buy a piece of ground and then no one could more. Leave me in peace, Tonincheon."

With stubborn tenacity he continued:

"But you might get sick. What would become of you then? It would be so simple to lay the 200 francs aside, and who will know that you have sold your hair when you wear a hood?"

"Go your way. I must dispense myself if I listen to you. Nevertheless, I believe I should die of sorrow if my hair were cut off. No word more on the subject."

"As you will," he said at last; "but remember, I place 200 francs at your disposal."

He withdrew, turned around after some steps, and said, holding one finger in the air: "Two hundred francs, think of it!"

The old woman made a gesture of indifference and the hair dealer disappeared at the corner of the street.

This conversation had taken place on a Sunday afternoon, and, as she had been accustomed for 20 years, Mother Nanette went toward evening to deliver to the tenant's wife the flax carried away during the week, receiving for it the customary pay—a large loaf of bread and a modest silver coin.

Nimble and joyous, the old woman returned home by nightfall, the bread under her arm and the coin in the pocket of her black apron. In spite of her 70 years she still walked vigorously.

Nearing the threshold of her door she noticed her neighbor, Mariette Cottill, the shoemaker's wife, who wanted to give her a letter which the postman had brought in her absence. A pleasant smile gleamed over the fresh and cheerful face of the old woman.

"The letter is from my grandson, Jean Nanette."

The neighbor shook her head. "I do not know," she said. "I do not recognize his handwriting—and then would Jean himself have made a mistake in the address? But see, it is so illegible that the letter was sent in different places before it reached here."

Thereupon she extended the envelope. The old woman became pale; her limbs trembled and she said anxiously:

"Still, Mariette, it is from Jean. Who else could write to me? I have nothing to expect from any one in the world. But if he can no more write his grandmother's name and his vil-

lage, he must be very sick—sick, my child, all that remains to me on earth. Read quickly, Mariette, I beg."

Both women stepped into the shoemaker's house and Mother Nanette sank exhausted on a chair. Now the neighbor who served as secretary for the old woman who could neither read nor write, deciphered, with pains, the trembling letters, the short, loosely arranged sentences of the letter, which was as follows:

"My Dear Old Grandmother: We were too happy; it could not last long. I had found a good place, would soon have come back to you again and we would have been separated no more."

"But it was too hard. You don't know how hard work is in Paris, always steps up and steps down."

"When the day is ended, one has scarcely any more limbs, and one's head swims. I would have done better to come home; there one has some air."

"I am writing all this to you to say that I am sick. The doctor believes it is over-exertion and homesickness. Ah, yes, that is it."

"I would have loved to see the village and you, grandmother, again. And now it is perhaps impossible."

"My master could not keep me. He sent me to the hospital, and the head physician, an old man who appears right good-hearted and wears a red rosette, shakes his head when he sees me—and he is never mistaken."

"Therefore, dear grandmother, I say farewell to you. It is bad to have to die without your embrace, yet we are too poor for you to come. In this letter you may see that your child thought of you up to the last moment. Your own loving grandson."

"JEAN NANNETTE."

The grandmother sat in her chair immovable as if petrified. She did not cry. One cannot cry when such deep pain paralyzes all the strength of body and soul.

Was it possible? Her grandson, her Jean, all that remained of her family, all that she loved in the world, to die far from her in the great city? To die in a hospital, without one kiss, one last blessing? No, no; that was a horrible dream.

She knew nothing more, and the thoughts whirled in her saddened brain. But, suddenly she rose and ran into her house like a wounded animal that flees to its hole.

In feverish haste, without clearly knowing what she did, Mother Nanette had thrown the few pieces of silver on the table; her entire means, kept until now in a secret hiding place. Her eyes rested motionless on these petty savings.

She said to herself, with despair, that it would not pay for the journey to Paris. Ah, yes, she was poor, too poor to embrace her dying child. And for the first time, the diligent worker exhaled her poverty.

Many years ago the journey by railroad from this village of Auvergne to Paris cost 30 francs. Thirty francs! an unheard of sum for an old woman who earned by spinning scarcely a franc a week. Where should she get 30 francs, the immediate possession of which was now her only object in life?

Who in the town was generous enough to loan her—the poor spinner? Thirty francs she must have, and she would serve the giver to the end of her days.

The old woman pressed her worn fingers upon her white forehead, for her Jean lay dying, and the dying have no time to wait. By this movement she pressed the thick, snowy tresses, and suddenly rose before her the joking face of her hair dealer.

"I keep 200 francs at your order—think of that."

Mother Nanette rushed out. Only stopping to close the door, she ran across the street. She felt no fatigue, she knew only that her child, her Jean, lay dying in a Paris hospital and she must hasten to him at any cost.

Antoine Honlin was reading at the table and looked astounded when the old woman entered.

"Two hundred francs, you said, is it not true?" she cried, breathlessly.

"Yes, yes," he replied quickly without rightly understanding.

With hasty movements the old woman tore off her hood.

Honlin wished nothing better, for he feared the old woman might change her mind. Over the trembling shoulders fell the wonderful silver hair, the precious ornament of her old age and her former pride.

The shears cut through the white mass and Mother Nanette could not hold back a shiver as the cold instrument touched her. Tears flowed slowly down her cheeks, which the sudden storm of sorrow had paled.

Then she shrugged her shoulders. What did the hair matter? Anything to give pleasure to a loved child.

"So, Mother Nanette," declared the dealer, laughing, "now we are through, put on your hood and no one will notice anything."

Hastily she put the hood on her head.

"And the money?" she cried quickly. The man counted out the ten gold pieces.

"Now, who was right?" he laughed. "See, Mother Nanette, one should foretell nothing."

She heard nothing and hastened away as she had come, while her trembling fingers eagerly grasped the money. Without other baggage than the indispensable basket which the peasant carries, without changing her clothing, Mother Nanette hastened toward the station and traveled the whole night to Paris.

On a Monday noon she stepped out of the train at the station, and, confused by the stream of travelers, made her way into the street. Worn out by the exertion and her tears, she stood by the baggage room and knew not which way to turn. She was like a poor, lost dog hiding in a corner.

But suddenly she recollected herself and gathered her courage. She dare not waste a moment, for Jean lay dying, and she must go to him in time. A baggage man went by and she asked him:

"Ah, please, where is the Charity hospital?"

"Ah, yes," she replied hastily. "Very well; then wait." He signed to a driver. "Drive this poor woman to the Charity hospital."

"That will be 35 sous," said the driver.

Mother Nanette gave him two francs and begged, "Be quick."

Some minutes later the cabman set her down at the hospital that she saw with beating heart. Would she find her child still living? A man wearing a uniform stopped her when she tried to enter.

"You must come later; this is not the visiting hour."

The old woman wrung her hands.

"Have pity, sir. I have come from my village—it is so far. I have traveled the whole night because my child lies dying and I have only him."

The man looked at her and was touched by the old face on which was painted such great anxiety.

"Very well," he said in gentler tones. "Go to the right."

A young man wearing a doctor's apron passed near her, and timidly she asked where was Jean Nanette. The intelligent face of the young man brightened.

"Jean Nanette? Ah, yes; No. 22; that is my room. I take care of him. Are you indeed his grandmother?"

Agitation choked the old woman. She nodded affirmatively.

"Ah, the poor young man," continued the physician joyfully, "that will do him more good than all the prescriptions of all the celebrated physicians. He had not hoped that you would be able to come. Follow me, but softly, he is sleeping. That will be a beautiful awakening when he sees his old grandmother. I believe he will soon get well now."

With hearty, comforting words he led the old woman to the bed of her grandchild, and Mother Nanette, who until now had scarcely wept, felt hot drops moisten her eyes. Softly the physician drew the curtain aside and the old woman saw a thin face with closed eyes that looked nearly as white as the bed cover.

That was her Jean, her beautiful, strong young man who, when he left her, was strong as an oak. Suddenly the sick one awoke, opened his eyes and believed it was a dream when he saw the dearly loved one.

"No, no, it is not a dream," declared the physician; "it is your grandmother. Now, good woman, embrace the young man, but do not talk. I shall sit by the door."

The grandmother no longer felt the tears which ran down her cheeks; she bent and pressed her trembling lips on the thin face while two thin arms clasped her neck and a trembling voice, which appeared to come from a distance, stammered, "Grandmother! ah! grandmother!"

"How did you manage to come here, grandmother?" asked the sick one, later.

The old woman told an innocent lie: "I had savings; see there."

She opened the basket and showed the gold in her open hand, while Jean laughed delightedly.

"That is all right," said the physician, "with that you can take him home. Keep quiet now; I am responsible for his recovery." Then he withdrew on tiptoe, while Jean fell back in happy slumber.

But Mother Nanette remained sitting at the head of the bed, her basket on her knees, and blessed the offering to which she owed the life of her loved grandchild.—N. Y. Sun.

**DID NOT APPRECIATE GIRLS.**

When a Young Man John Quincy Adams Preferred the Society of Members of His Own Sex.

That part of the diary of John Quincy Adams which he wrote during his residence in Newburyport as a young law student in the office of Theophilus Parsons has recently been published for the first time. There are many interesting entries; but it must be admitted—although with a smile rather than a frown—that the distinguished youth was something of a prig.

Considering his unusual childhood, which had in it so little of what is childish and so much early travel and companionship with elderly and famous men, it is not surprising that such was the case. In nothing is it made more evident than in his superior comments upon the pretty girls of his acquaintance—in whom it is evident he felt more interest than he thought he did, or he would not have taken such pains to characterize them; for to each fair maiden in turn is assigned her pen portrait, carefully drawn.

Yet he could say, after an evening spent with a number of young men, the previous one having been passed with ladies:

"We spent our time in sociable chat and in singing; not such unmeaning, insignificant songs as those with which we killed our time last evening, but good, jovial, expressive songs such as we sang at college, 'when mirth and jollity prevail.'"

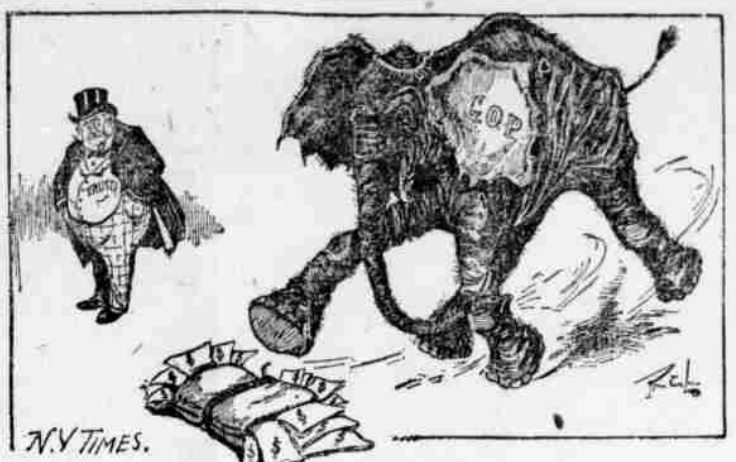
One evening of this kind gives me more real satisfaction than 50 pass'd in a company of girls. (I beg their pardon.)"

Here is how he sketched one of the despised sex after a first meeting:

"Miss Tucker, who likewise passed the evening there, is fair, rather too large for gentility, with a countenance which has not sufficient animation or expression to be very strikingly agreeable. Her manners are pleasing. If I could find fault with any part of them it would be with the appearance of an affectation of softness. This defect is not uncommon; but however amiable a real sweetness of disposition may be, this appearance of it in the manner is not calculated to win my heart."

It is an amusing commentary on the young man's perspicacity that Alice Tucker, this mild maiden of the placid countenance, demure as she appeared in company, left behind her a diary, never published, full of characterizations quite as graphic, and doubtless as accurate, as his, quotations from which now appear freely in the footnotes to his record, her opinions usually coinciding with and enhancing the effect of his own. It is a pity she did not happen to characterize her critic among the rest; but perhaps his manhood did not sufficiently win her heart to make it appear worth while, even though she could scarcely have found him "soft."

## THE TRUSTS—HERE'S WHERE THE ELEPHANT STEPS ON MY POCKET BOOK AGAIN.



### PROTECTION AND WOOL.

System by Which the Farmer Is Fleeced to Help the Trusts Along.

It is rather singular that about all the products of the farm that have no real tariff protection are advancing in price very materially, but wool, the one product that is protected to the verge of prohibition, is standing still, and in some cases even declining in price. Cotton has been bringing more than the average price the farmer and sheep ranch men are getting for wool. There is no tariff on cotton, no protection fosters its growth, while the tariff on wool is 11 cents a pound. How can our protection enthusiasts explain this anomaly which, according to their theory, shows that the duty on wool is still too low? Why don't they amend the tariff and give the farmer more protection instead of standing pat? The imports of foreign wool are increasing. The last report of commerce and finance, issued by the department of commerce and labor, gives the imports of wool for the 11 months ending November for 1901 in pounds as 111,748,490; 1902, 161,631,218; 1903, 163,278,392. Thus for the same period foreign wool has been coming in the past year at the rate of over 50,000,000 pounds more than in 1901.

What is the reason for this increased competition of the foreign wool growers with our home product? In spite of nearly 100 per cent. protection the sheep industry is not so prosperous as it was when we had free wool under the tariff of 1894. The price of woolen goods is declining from the inability of the great majority of our people to buy wool clothing. Cotton and shoddy have largely taken the place of wool from the sheer necessity of the family with limited incomes to meet the increased cost of living. The importation of foreign wool is principally of the coarse grades, used in the manufacture of carpets. That class of wool our wool growers cannot supply in sufficient quantity to supply the demand, and the high tariff only adds to the cost of the articles made from it. The farmer, when he buys a carpet, or other product made of coarse wool, pays a big tax on it, with not even the compensating advantage of an increased profit on the wool he himself raises. Those farmers who do not raise sheep are practically unprotected by the tariff, although nearly all agricultural products are included in schedule G, of the tariff law; yet the surplus of agricultural products raised above what this country can consume, when sold abroad, must compete in the world's markets, and the price is fixed by the foreign buyers. The price paid in the home market is controlled by the price the surplus brings, so in that case protection does not protect the farmer. There are a few exceptions to this rule, including those who raise sugar cane, rice and wrapper tobacco, but the trusts that control the market for those products get the largest slice of the profits. Some farmers who live near the Canadian border may be slightly protected by the lack of competition on eggs and vegetables from their Canadian neighbors, but this advantage, if any, is more than overborne by the increased price of what they purchase.

The farmer that votes to continue the protection tariff votes to protect and foster the trusts, and not only pays the tariff tax to the government but a much greater tax on about all he buys to the favored corporations.

**Post Office Graft.**

The astounding information is given in the report of the auditor of the post office department that nearly \$40,000,000 is paid the railroads for the transporting of the mails without any vouchers showing the service rendered or the weight carried or any details of the transaction except that so much money is due some corporation. Is it any wonder that under such a loose system the amount paid to the railroads constantly and largely increases? How much graft there is in these secret transactions between the post office and the railroads has never been discovered; but evidence has been reproduced in congress that the rentals of the postal cars cost double each year the price at which new cars could be purchased. The weight of the mails carried and the system of weighing is, on its face, padded in the interests of the railroads. The postmaster general, in his report, just published, says that the increased cost for the group of states known as the middle west is 18.05 per cent. and yet the growth of the post office business for the whole country is less than nine per cent. The claim that the smaller grafts in the post office department have been investigated while the greater ones have not been unearthed seems to be proven from the reports of the government officers who know the facts and cannot entirely conceal them.

**No More Dead Issues.**

The convention of 1904 should express the broad principles of the democracy since the beginning of the party, but must frame its platform as related to the policies of to-day rather than those of four, eight or thirty-six years ago. A party to be vital must not be living in the past, but should present to the country its views on the questions of interest to-day. True, the democratic party should not take a position that would be construed into a repudiation of its acts in past years.

**NOT A SINGLE TRUST.**

Secretary Cortelyou is at the head of the new department of commerce, whose bureau of industries has been trying so hard for a while to find a bad trust. If such a trust is found the life is to be frightened out of it by publishing the facts in regard to its crookedness.

Although we have frequently taken the trouble to tell Mr. Cortelyou where to fish if he wants to catch a big string of trusts, yet there is no evidence that he has as yet got a nibble. His patience must be nearly exhausted. Once more we will tell him that the trade and commercial papers and journals are filled with information about old and new trusts, many of which are of the most obnoxious type.

The Iron Age of Feb. 4 is filled with such information. Thus, the manufacturers of axes have just formed a new trust, which, at one jump, advanced the price of axes \$1 a dozen. The hatchet manufacturers have behaved in a similar way. "Their organization," says the Iron Age, "is a strong one, regulating prices and production, and in its general features resembles the shovel association."

The axe, hatchet and shovel trusts, when they put up prices from 25 to 100 per cent. are most obnoxious to farmers, carpenters and others. They should be ferreted out and held up to public scorn. Then, if publicity don't make them ashamed of themselves and cause them to mend their wicked ways, perhaps it will occur to some bright member of President Roosevelt's official household to take away the tariff that protects these pestiferous trusts.

Mr. Cortelyou may remember the story of the bad boys up in the tree stealing the apples, who laughed at the farmer while he tried to drive them out by throwing tufts of grass at them, but who changed their tunes and ran away when he began to throw stones. That farmer was not such an everlasting clump, after all.

**POINTED PARAGRAPHS.**

Gov. Taft's report says the Philippines are tranquil except the Moros. A few more prescriptions by Dr. Wood will probably make at least a few more of the Moros permanently tranquil.—N. Y. World.

Some of our republican friends are wondering who is going to manage Mr. Roosevelt's campaign, while others are wondering if he is going to have any campaign to manage.—Binghamton (N. Y.) Leader.

Another record has gone. It was broken by the republican house of representatives when 239 private pension bills were put through in 155 minutes. Clearly it is not "too soon before a presidential election" to pass one kind of legislation.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

It has been apparent for a long time that Mr. Roosevelt's violent verification that he was being pursued by the trusts was merely a part of the game of politics. There has been no tangible evidence of opposition from that quarter, and goodness knows, there has been no occasion for it. But opposition from really conservative republicans in Indiana is a very different matter.—Indianapolis Sentinel.

Appropos of the Nebraska statesman who shudders at the thought of divorce for democracy and defeat, the Cortland Democrat says: "One thing which our esteemed republican contemporaries failed to note is that Mr. Bryan is saying it all. Nobody seconds the motion. So far for unanimous dissent. Men who have stood by him through thick and thin are expressing their regret that he should exhibit such narrow Bourbonism, and destroy his chance for future usefulness."—Binghamton (N. Y.) Leader.

Senators, congressmen, editors, state chairmen, political bosses and political whips, cabinet ministers and government gaugers, labor leaders and Wall street sharks, men of all classes, conditions, races and colors, have been invited, dined, consulted and organized by a civil service president to nominate himself for the highest office in the gift of the American people. We regret, for the honor of the republic, that the most vicious form of machine politics has been and is now being exercised by the occupant of the white house.—Cincinnati Commercial Tribune (Rep.).

**Will Seek a Ship Subsidy.**

That another push is to be made for a ship subsidy is clear. But the chances are that nothing will be done at the present session beyond the possible creation of a commission to consider the whole question of our mercantile marine. However, the discussion will go steadily on. While we do not believe that trade follows the flag, it is undoubtedly true that with American steamers drumming up trade all over the world, our commerce would increase. So we all want a merchant marine. But we do not believe that it can be or ought to be had through a subsidy. Give us freer trade relations with the rest of the world, make the shipping industry profitable by giving it free play, allow our people to buy ships wherever they please, and sail them under the American flag, and the merchant marine will take care of itself.—Indianapolis News.

### NOT A SINGLE TRUST.

Cortelyou's Bureau of Industries Has Failed to Find One That Is "Bad."

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## LEARNING TO SHOOT WELL.

A Duty That Is Regarded as of Great Importance in Government Military Circles.

One of the most important events in the administration of Secretary Root has been the organization of the board of promotion of rifle practice, which has recently been in session in this city, reports Army and Navy. The results of the recent deliberations are embodied in certain recommendations for the conditions of the national match open to teams of 12 men from the army, navy and marine corps, and the national guard or uniformed militia; the United States individual match and a national pistol match, the two latter events to be open to the army, navy, marine corps, organized militia and members of the National Rifle association and affiliated clubs, military or civilian.

The importance of this programme, the place and date of the events, yet to be determined, is largely derived from the opportunity it affords for rifle practice among a class of people who have hitherto ignored this useful work. The value of such practice from a military standpoint is in the training of the young men in the country in the art of shooting straight, an element which is bound to contribute materially to the efficiency of our volunteer armies in the future.

Secretary Root said in his annual report that it is of small, if any, use to pay, equip, subsidize and transport a soldier to a battlefront unless he can hit the enemy when he shoots at him. Without that accuracy in marksmanship an army might well not be, and there seems no better way of acquiring this proficiency than that which is provided by the plans of the board for the promotion of rifle practice. Time was when it was a part of every boy's training that he should be able to shoot a rifle or shotgun, and be able to hit the object at which he aimed. Now, it is said to say, most of the young men, especially those in the settled communities, have never fired a gun, and would be of little use in an army equipped with anything but bludgeons.

This deterioration of skill has reached such dimensions as to constitute a menace in this country, and is likely to prove disastrous to the best-laid plans of strategy when it becomes necessary to employ a volunteer force, called suddenly into service. Under the present situation we would find its members willing enough in their patriotism, which leads them to offer their services for the firing line, but they would be of small value in the capacity of the soldier. This first duty, as Mr. Root aptly puts it, is to be able to shoot straight. The board for the promotion of rifle practice has an important task, therefore, and judging from the results of its recent session, it is proving itself equal to its far-reaching responsibilities.

**LEFT-HANDED PENMEN.**

Are Not Considered Desirable as Clerks in Government Departments at Washington.